

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission

McHale Complex, Riverside Park,
1212 Riverside Drive, Logansport, IN 46947

Meeting Minutes- November 5, 2008

Voting Member Present:

Adams County – John Friedt
Carroll County - George Mears
Cass County - Janet Fawley
DNR – Dale Brier
Huntington County – Dave Hacker
Miami County - Ken Einselen
Sullivan County - John J. Gettinger
Tippecanoe County – Lucky Neiburger
Vermillion County - James McFall
Vigo County - Keith Ruble (alternate)
Warren County – Louise Jewell (alt)

Proxy Voters Present:

Allen County – Sam Schwartz
Knox County - Rory Robinson
Posey County - Marianna Kassenbrock
Wells County – Diann McIntosh

Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy:

Gibson County - N. Sherrell Marginet
Parke County – Penny Cox
Fountain County - Lowell Osborn
Jay County - Faron Parr
Wabash County - Michael Beauchamp

Non-Voting Members Present:

none

Commission and DNR staff Present

Ron James – WHRCC Executive Director
Jewell Baxter - DNR

Guests:

Eric Stallsmith – IndianaOutfitters.com
Mercedes Brugh, Cass County (alternate)

Call to Order, Receipt of Proxies and Introductions

John Gettinger called the meeting to order at 1:50pm. Dale Brier read each proxy name and who they were representing. Everyone was asked to introduce themselves.

Review and Approval of September 10, 2008 Meeting Minutes

John G. asked if there were any corrections or amendments to the September 10, 2008 meeting minutes. Dianne McIntosh noted she was listed as a ‘guest’ instead of alternate for her county. Ron J. explained that when the county representative is present, the alternate is a non-voting guest. Ken Einselen moved approval as presented, George Mears 2nd. Motion carried.

President’s Report (John Gettinger)

John G. thanked Janet Fawley and Banks of the Wabash, Inc. for organizing the preceding luncheon for Senator Tom Weatherwax. The Corridor presented Senator Weatherwax with the Corridor’s Citizen Award at the luncheon. John noted that this is the time for the Corridor to pursue legislative projects.

John said that the 8th grade rafting trip was a success. There were so many adults willing to help that they had a waiting list. Sponsors, too, were plentiful, making the trip well financed.

John said that he was very active with the Busseron Creek watershed project; learning about water and water quality. There were no questions or concerns with his report.

Executive Director's Report (Ron James)

Ron J. reported his past 60 days included two successful De-trash events, one for Lafayette/ West Lafayette, and the other for Tippecanoe County in conjunction with the Purdue "Green Week". Ron upgraded or refurbished signage at 5 water trail access points. Ron spoke on his visit to Vermillion County, where he was able to obtain approval from their Commissioners of the Corridor's plans for signage promoting the river. Ron again asked for each representative to arrange for Ron to speak to their Boards of Commissioners no less than every two years.

Finance Report (Dale Brier)

Dale B. said that nothing has changed since the corridor's last meeting. Projected expenditures are set with 7% reserve; that gives the Commission an \$84,000 annual level for 2009-2011. He said that travel was up; each meeting costing an average of \$750. Dale said that we haven't spent much, as yet, but most of the money is 'spoken for' in the budget. He said that the bridge signage purchase hasn't been taken out of the account yet. Dale spoke on making the final payment to Ron from the previous budget cycle. Ron's new contract started last week and will be paid from 2008 – 2009 money; from funds available last July. Dale announced his promotion to Chief of the Streams and Trails section.

Committee Reports

Sign programs: River Road, Community, Corridor (Jim M, Dave H, and Ron J)

Jim McFall said he was able to get Vermillion "River Community" signs posted. Jim took his signs to his mayor's office. The mayor liked the signs, asked for 6, and put them on the city's existing posts, avoiding INDOT's red tape. Two communities qualify in Vermillion County.

Dave Hacker has had the Huntington Corridor Community signs placed on existing posts, also. Four communities in Huntington County qualify, though not all have been marked yet. Dave went back to the Board of Commissioners and asked for a designation of a river road connecting to Allen County along the Little River into Huntington County and the Wabash River. Dave coordinated the connection with Ron Zartman. Dave has yet to coordinate with either Wells or Wabash County, but there seemed to be only one road along which Wabash and Huntington could connect. Dave H. talked to Ron Z. about the location of the best "river road" in Huntington County being to the south and not remotely close to a canal towpath. It would be confusing to people to use the canal boat logo on this route's signs. Dave presented a 4" sticker printed using the River Road logo. This sticker was designed to be added to the signs in the banner area to avoid confusion with the Towpath Road routes. As with other local routes, the stickers would be used in conjunction with directional arrows pointing the way.

Ken E. noted that his Board of Commissioners had also decided to put their signs across the valley from the canal, on the south side of the river. The route will be designated as a River Road and not a Towpath Road in this instance. Ken liked the River Road decal as it could be used to provide continuity appropriate to the River Road program.

Dave reported that, in quantities of 100 or more, the decals would cost around a \$1 each. Marianna Kassenbrock asserted that the sticker should use the same color and art as the original to keep its integrity. Dave H. moved the Commission purchase 100 of the stickers, Louise Jewell 2nd. Dale B. inquired of similar needs for the stickers in other counties. The Terre Haute area and south was mentioned as the canal takes off eastward toward Evansville. Sizing was discussed to fit the banner space and banner signs to which they will be added. The motion was amended (Lucky Neiburger) to specify that the decal logo would be 5" diameter and utilize the corridor's artwork and color. The amended motion was seconded (Marianna K.). All motions carried.

Ron J. said the Wabash River Heritage Corridor signs are scheduled for delivery around November 19, 2008. These signs cost around \$24 each in the 100 sign quantity ordered.

Water Trail-Bridge and Access signs

The editing mark-ups for the Water Trail maps, to include the parks, vendors for food, gas, lodging, water and other amenities, access point changes and any corrections of contact information, were to be turned in to Ron J. He allowed that the deadline could be put off until the January meeting but urged no further delay in this important effort.

Banks of the Wabash

Ken E. said that the group met this morning and discussed the potential approval of an 1812 commemorative chapter. Ken said that they will be working with Dale Phillips on the events which should be underway by 2010/2011 and requested committee members for the planning starting next year. John G. noted the concept is to re-enact the events of 1810 – 1811 in the Indiana locations where they took place.

Legislative - 2009 Legislation Plan

Janet F. reported that both houses of the legislature scheduled their organization meeting for today leading to a poor turn-out of Wabash legislators at the luncheon award ceremony. Janet was assured by Senator Weatherwax, however, that he would discuss the Corridor needs with his successor, Randy Head. Rep. Dale Grubb will be pressed to support the corridor's mineral royalty bill in the House. Ron J. mentioned that last year's bill needed a few changes – which he had made in a 'proposed' bill which was sent around to Corridor members via email. John said that he should see Rep. Grubb before the legislature opens to see what proposal he is going to submit to the house. All were urged to get the latest version of the bill to their representative and senator, especially Senators Dieg, Kersey, Skinner, Dillon, and Representatives Leonard, Grubb, Waterman, Hume. Ideally, sponsors should come from both houses and both parties.

Old Business

War of 1812 Bicentennial

Per the Banks report, a fiscal agent structure is being created for this committee based on chapter membership set-up available from BOW as a non-profit. Committee members include: Shane Cooper, Diann M., Bruce Beasley, Frank Duphin, Dale P., Lucky N., and Ken E.

Broad of Commissioners Presentation

Ron met with the Vermillion Co. Board of Commissioners on October 7, briefed them on our programs, and received their approval for our sign postings. Ron needs more such meetings.

Fourth edition corridor brochure

Janet F. said that the committee is going to need money for the creation and printing of the next edition of our signature brochure. She proposed that each member county contribute \$2000. Dale offered to look into any Corridor Funds still on the books; whether it could be spent on brochures or how it might be claimed for this use. Ron related that PEN charged less than \$15,000 for the third printing but allowed there was a discount due to PEN's new press at the time. Editing was minimal for the 3rd edition while there is some need for a more extensive edit leading to the next printing, such things as new items, pictures, text, etc. Each member should ask either their Board of Commissioners or Convention & Visitors Bureau for a minimum of \$1000 to aid in the edit and reprint. Committee: Jan F., Ron J., Diann M., and Ken E.

WabashRiver.us leasing proposal

Margie Deverall, who chaired the committee looking into this proposal, was unable to attend. Accordingly, discussion on leasing WabashRiver.us was put off till January's meeting.

Mid-Wabash Watershed

A Purdue-lead group has received an IDEM 319 grant to develop templates for improving water quality in various types of land uses (urban, suburban and rural) using the watersheds feeding into and including the Wabash River in the Tippecanoe Co. area. Ron noted that, with Purdue professors running the project, the templates will result from what promises to be a well thought out scientific process. Ron J. is involved as a member of their search committee seeking the best candidate to fill this 319's coordinator position.

Ron also noted the formation by another Purdue professor of a Wabash research council. Its purpose is to share information on studies of Wabash River watersheds. The formation meeting is planned for November 21, 2008; Ron asked for an attending volunteer by Nov. 18th.

New Business

Juried Art Show

Ron said that he talked to Jim Faulkner about a juried art competition and show, with a Wabash River theme, to create a culture program during either the 2011 or 2016 time periods. Margie D., who has experience with the West Lafayette "Art on the Wabash", has agreed to chair and may be ready to expand on a concept as early as the January meeting.

Announcements and General Discussion

Keith Ruble updated the group on the Vigo County effort to purchase, and return to wetlands, up to 5000 acres of Wabash riparian buffer. Wetland Reserve, a program of the federal government, is designed to get agriculture out of the floodplain by buying easements.

Ron noted the National River Rally is May 29-June 1, 2009. He noted he had made two proposals on workshops he could give that, if accepted, would cut the cost of his attendance. He said that someone should go, be it him or another board member. He said that the 2nd day is river management day. Louise J. noted it is the stated policy of the Commission to send the executive director every year. All were asked to review their calendars for their own possible attendance.

Dave H asked about the presence of the WRHCC at the state fair. Ron said that there has been discussion on making a free-standing exhibit for next year's fair. Dale said he would check into space in the DNR building and extra equipment availability for a WRHCC display.

Comments by Visitors; Final Comments by Commission Members and Alternates

John stated that the next meeting would be 1:00 pm on January 14, 2009 at the Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room A, 402 W. Washington St, Indianapolis, IN. George Mears moved to adjourn the meeting, Jim M. 2nd, the meeting was adjourned.